

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6281

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, UK

SUBJ: CIVAIR - FLYING TIGER ROC/HONG KONG SERVICE

REF: STATE 261281

1. OUR RECENT EXPERIENCE IN TRYING TO DEAL WITH SEABOARD'S ROUTE 2 PROBLEM LEADS US TO AGREE WITH DEPARTMENT'S VIEW (PARA 3 REFTEL) THAT HMG WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY WANT SOMETHING IN RETURN FOR ADDITION OF KAOHSIUNG TO US ROUTE 6 AND FACT THAT NEW POINT COULD BE ADDED VIRTUALLY WITHOUT COST TO BRITISH UNLIKELY TO MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE. IT WILL BE RECALLED IN SEABOARD CASE ALMOST IDENTICAL SITUATION PREVAILED. INDEED, IN THAT CASE WE COULD DEMONSTRATE TO UK THAT INSISTENCE ON NARROW INTERPRETATION OF AGREEMENT WOULD WORK TO ITS DISADVANTAGE OF ACTION.

2. BRITISH ARE NOT HAPPY WITH US/UK AVIATION RELATIONS. THEY SEE US CARRIERS OUTEARNING BRITISH CARRIERS ON SCHEDULED SERVICES BY ABOUT TWO TO ONE AND CARRYING ALMOST 85 PERCENT OF US/UK CHARTER TRAFFIC. IN ADDITION, US FAILURE TO ISSUE LAKER SKYTRAIN LICENSE STILL BITTERLY RESENTED BY MANY. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, BRITISH SEE NO COMPELLING REASON TO DO US CARRIERS ANY FAVORS. ON CONTRARY, THEY GENERALLY INCLINED SCRUTINIZE US AIRLINES OPERATIONS VERY CLOSELY TO ENSURE THEY ARE CONFORMING TO STRICT BRITISH INTERPRETATION OF TERMS OF BILATERAL

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AGREEMENT.

3. ON QUESTION OF ADDING KAOHSIUNG TO ROUTE 6, WE WOULD EXPECT BRITISH TO RESPOND THAT THEY WOULD BE WILLING TO NEGOTIATE KAOHSIUNG RIGHTS FOR US CARRIERS. IF SEABOARD CASE ANY EXAMPLE, HOWEVER, WHEN IT COMES TO NEGOTIATING COMPENSATING BENEFIT FOR UK, BRITISH NOT LIKELY PUT FORWARD ANY REALISTIC PROPOSALS MAKING NEGOTIATING PROCESS RATHER LIKE PUSHING ON A STRING.

4. ACCORDING TO PARA 2 REFTTEL, FLYING TIGER HAS ALREADY REQUESTED PERMISSION FROM DEPT. OF TRADE TO OPERATE TAIPEI/KAOHSIUNG/HONG KONG WITHOUT TRAFFIC RIGHTS KAOHSIUNG/HONG KONG. IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, WE ARE INCLINED TO BELIEVE THAT EMBASSY INTERVENTION WOULD LEAD BRITISH TO BELIEVE THAT CONCESSION IS MORE VALUABLE THAN IT REALLY IS AND THEREFORE WOULD INCREASE ALREADY CONSIDERABLE LIKLIHOOD OF NEGATIVE REPLY.

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